

David

A Catechism

OF THE

CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE



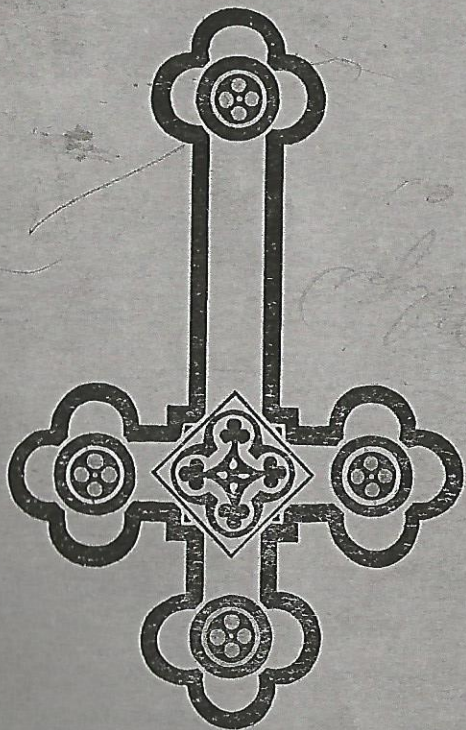
OF THE

**Holy Eastern Orthodox Catholic
and Apostolic Church**

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Dedication

In deep appreciation for the aid and interest always shown in the religious education of Our Archdiocese, this book is affectionately dedicated to our beloved friend.

MONSOUR H. LAHAM
of Boston, Massachusetts

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***Holy Eastern Orthodox Catholic
and Apostolic Church***

SYRIAN ANTIOCHIAN ORTHODOX ARCHDIOCESE
of New York and All North America
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IMPRIMATUR

THIS CATHECHISM is hereby approved and authorized
for the use of all the faithful Orthodox Christians of our
Archdiocese.

✠ ANTONY BASHIR

*Metropolitan Archbishop of the Syrian Antiochian Ortho-
dox Archdiocese of New York and all North America.*

Brooklyn, N. Y.

July 30, 1949

INTRODUCTION

FAITH, KNOWLEDGE, AND REVELATION

Faith is a means to knowledge of the supernatural and eternal truth revealed in Jesus Christ. It has a different foundation from that of human reasoning, an independent basis apart from man himself: the truth of God's own word, which is constant and unchanging. Faith never changes into knowledge but rather precedes it, making possible an ever-widening sphere of knowledge. We must first believe, that we may know.

Knowledge is ordinarily concerned with things comprehensible to the unaided human reason, and is founded on experience obtained by examination of those things. There is, however, a body of knowledge outside the limited area of purely human experience and reasoning. This material is presented to man by the Holy Spirit and must first be seized by faith. It is guaranteed by phenomena in the regular world of experience, which phenomena we call miracles. We recognize that miracles are normal occurrences in the sight of God, although they surpass our limited understanding. We accept them on faith, because they help us to know something about God.

We may come to some knowledge of God by contemplation of created things, but this knowledge is imperfect and insufficient in itself. Since God is not only above His creation, but also working in it, in His goodness, wisdom, and power, it is in accordance with His nature to reveal Himself to man. He created man in His image and likeness; this likeness is chiefly in the soul of man, which is a deathless spirit. Man is capable of receiving God's revelation of Himself, especially as the Holy Spirit of God quickens the spirit of man and strengthens his powers of perception and understanding.

The content of Divine Revelation is a supernatural truth

above and beyond that discoverable by man alone and unaided. This truth, when revealed, complements other truths which man has discovered for himself, aiding him to a better understanding of himself, his world, and above all, of God. God has revealed himself to us, that we may rightly believe in Him and worthily do Him honor, and receive in return eternal salvation.

God's revelation of Himself is embodied in Holy Scripture and Holy Tradition.

HOLY SCRIPTURE AND HOLY TRADITION

The sources of Orthodox Catholic teaching are Holy Scripture and Holy Tradition. Holy Scripture is a collection of books written by inspired men, in which is contained the Divine revelation. This collection of books is called the Bible, and is made up of the Old Testament, the books written before the birth of Christ, and the New Testament, the books written after the birth of Christ.

The official text of the Old Testament for the Orthodox Catholic Church is the Septuagint version, translated from the Hebrew into the Greek language in the third century before Christ. It has the same authority for the Church as the original, and was the text used by the Apostles.

The official text of the New Testament is the original Greek; no translations into modern Greek are allowed, and no translation has the authority of the original. Many untrustworthy translations have been published by various religious groups to further their own peculiar interpretations of the Scriptures; these translations are forbidden to be used by the Orthodox Catholic faithful.

The Bible may not be used by individuals as a source from which to derive any desired doctrine; its meaning is not self-evident, and it must be interpreted in the light of the Church's teachings. The church is the only infallible interpreter of Holy Scripture. To the Church our Lord Jesus Christ gave His teachings by word of mouth

and example, and the Church has faithfully preserved them. The Bible assumes the existence of oral tradition, which preceded and always supplemented it. The Apostles first taught orally, and when their teachings were written down it was the Church which approved as authentic those writings known to be consistent with the apostolic tradition preserved in the Church.

Holy Tradition is the guarantee for the right interpretation of the Scriptures; the two are inseparable. Heretics in all ages have always quickly set aside Tradition and endeavored to base their individual interpretations of Christian truth on the Scriptures alone. The Church, however, which truly understands the Scriptures, continues to teach the same faith as always, defining and formulating it when necessary, but never creating new doctrines. This continuity of steady and unswerving tradition preserves the Church from heresy and novel opinions, and at the same time facilitates the expression of the living piety of the Church in each succeeding age.

Holy Tradition includes the doctrines of the Faith and the Sacraments with their attendant ritual as transmitted from one generation of the faithful to another both by word and example. It is embodied in the decrees and definitions of the Seven Ecumenical Councils¹, in the Nicene Creed², in the writings of the Fathers of the undivided Church³, and in the decrees and definitions of certain later synods and councils.

1. The Seven Ecumenical Councils are those of 1) Nicaea, 325 A.D.; 2) I Constantinople, 381; 3) Ephesus, 431; 4) Chalcedon, 451; 5) II Constantinople, 553; 6) III Constantinople, 680; and 7) II Nicaea, 787.

2. I.e., the Creed fixed at the sessions of the First and Second Ecumenical Councils; this is the only liturgical Creed of the Orthodox Catholic Church.

3. The patristic period is usually reckoned as closing with St. John of Damascus, who died about 749 A.D. His "Exposition of the Orthodox Faith" is a Compendium of the doctrinal teaching of the earlier Fathers of the Church.

THE CATECHISM

I

THE CREED

1 Q. What is the Creed?

A. The Creed is the Symbol of the Faith, a statement of the chief truths which the Church teaches, and which all Orthodox Catholic Christians are bound to believe.

2 Q. How is the Creed set forth?

A. In twelve parts, or articles, as follows:

- 1) I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible;
- 2) And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Only-begotten, Begotten of the Father before all worlds, Light of Light, Very God of Very God, Begotten, not made; ~~of one essence~~ with the Father, by whom all things were made;
- 3) Who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven, and was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary, and was made man;
- 4) And was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate, and suffered and was buried;
- 5) And the third day He rose again, according to the Scriptures;
- 6) And ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of the Father;
- 7) And he shall come again with glory to judge the quick and the dead, Whose kingdom shall have no end.
- 8) And I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the Giver of Life, Who proceedeth from the Father, Who with the Father and the Son together is

worshipped and glorified, Who spake by the Prophets;

9) And I believe in One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church.

10) I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins.

11) I look for the Resurrection of the dead,

12) And the Life of the world to come. Amen.

THE FIRST ARTICLE OF THE CREED

3 Q. What is the first article of the Creed?

A. "I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible."

4 Q. Why must we believe in God?

A. If we do not believe in God we cannot save our soul, which is from God; if we lose our soul, we lose God and eternal happiness in the world to come.

5 Q. What is God?

A. God is a spirit, perfect beyond measure.

6 Q. Why is there but one God?

A. Because God, Who is supremely perfect and infinite, cannot have an equal.

7 Q. Can we know the true essence of God?

A. The true essence of God is beyond our understanding, but we can have an idea of the perfect qualities of God, as He has revealed them to His Church.

8 Q. What idea of God's perfections can we obtain from His Divine Revelation?

A. From the Divine Revelation we learn that

1) God is a spirit.

2) God is eternal: He is without beginning and

without end, existing forever, and forever unchanging.

- 3) God is everywhere and knows all things, even our innermost secrets.
- 4) God can do all things: for Him nothing is difficult or impossible.
- 5) God is infinitely perfect, and self-sufficient in His perfection.
- 6) Because God is all-perfect, He is also all-holy, all-good, all-just, and all-merciful.

9 Q. What is man?

A. Man is a creature of God, made in His image and likeness, and composed of body and soul.

10 Q. Wherein lies the chief likeness of man to God?

A. In the soul of man, because it is a deathless spirit and has understanding and free will.

11 Q. Why did God create man?

A. To know God, to love Him, to serve and glorify Him in this world, and to obtain everlasting happiness with Him in the next world.

12 Q. What do we call that will of God which intends eternal happiness for man?

A. We call it Divine Predestination.

13 Q. Since man is not now completely happy, does God's Predestination of man to happiness remain unchanged?

A. Yes, for although man of his own free will left the way of happiness, God in His infinite mercy opened for man a new way to happiness, through His Only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ.

14 Q. Does God predestine anyone to evil?

A. No, God's predestination of man is to good only;

those who make proper use of their free will are predestined to glory, but those who make wrong use of their free will bring condemnation upon themselves.

15 Q. If God is everywhere, why do we say that He is in heaven, or in the Church?

A. God reveals His presence in many special ways; to the Saints in heaven He is manifested in glory; in the Church His presence is discerned by the faithful in the Holy Mysteries, especially in the Holy Sacrament of the Body and Blood of Christ.

16 Q. What is the Most Holy Trinity?

A. In God there are three Divine Persons: God the Father, the first Person of the Most Holy Trinity; God the Son, the second Person of the Most Holy Trinity; and God the Holy Spirit, the third Person of the Most Holy Trinity.

17 Q. Are the three Divine Persons of the Most Holy Trinity equal in all things?

A. The three Divine Persons are equal in all things, and have one and the same Divine nature and essence.

18 Q. What difference is there between the three Divine Persons of the Most Holy Trinity?

A. God the Father is neither begotten nor proceeds from any other Person; God the Son is from all eternity begotten of the Father; God the Holy Spirit from all eternity proceeds from the Father.

19 Q. Why is God called the Almighty?

A. Because He maintains all things by His power and His will.

20 Q. What is meant by the words of the Creed, "Maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible?"

A. God made all things, and nothing can exist without God.

21 Q. What are the "things visible and invisible?"

A. The things visible make up the material world we see around us; the things invisible comprise the spiritual world that is hidden from our eyes, but which God first created; the angels belong to this spiritual and invisible world.

22 Q. What are the Angels?

A. Bodiless spirits created by God to be His messengers and servants; they are endowed by Him with intelligence, will, and power.

23 Q. Are all Angels good and beneficent?

A. No, for some of the Angels disobeyed God and fell away from Him; these we call devils, who deceive men and try to persuade them to do evil.

THE SECOND ARTICLE OF THE CREED

24 Q. What is the second article of the Creed?

A. "And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Only-begotten, Begotten of the Father before all worlds, Light of Light, Very God of Very God, Begotten, not made; of one essence with the Father, by whom all things were made."

25 Q. What are we taught by the second article of the Creed?

A. We are taught that Jesus Christ is truly God. *Jesus* means *Savior*, because as God He came into the world to save men; *Christ* means *anointed*, because to His manhood were imparted beyond measure all the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

26 Q. Why is Jesus Christ called Lord?

A. Because He is true God, and God is the Lord and ruler of all.

27 Q. Why is Jesus Christ called "the Son of God, the Only-begotten, Begotten of the Father before all worlds?"

A. Because He only is the Son of God from all eternity, just as God the Father is from all eternity.

28 Q. What is meant by the words, "Light of Light?"

A. God the Father is the everlasting Light: of Him is begotten the Son of God, Who is also the everlasting Light; God the Father and God the Son are one and the same everlasting Light, indivisible and of one Divine nature.

29 Q. What is meant by the words, "Very God of Very God?"

A. The Son of God is called God in the same proper sense as God the Father is called God.

30 Q. Why does the Creed say that Jesus Christ is "Begotten, not made?"

A. Because He is the true Son of God, and not a creature of God.

31 Q. What is the meaning of the phrase, "of one essence with the Father?"

A. It means that the Son of God is of one and the same Divine essence with God the Father.

THE THIRD ARTICLE OF THE CREED

32 Q. What is the third article of the Creed?

A. "Who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven, and was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary, and was made man."

33 Q. Who were the first man and woman?

A. Adam and Eve, whom God created holy and innocent.

34 Q. What commandment did God give to Adam and Eve, that they might remain in their state of bliss?

A. He commanded them to be faithful and obedient to Him, to the end that they might be completely happy in this world and enjoy everlasting glory in the next world.

35 Q. Did Adam and Eve remain faithful to God?

A. No, they broke His commandment, and by the sin of their disobedience to God's will separated themselves from God and His grace.

36 Q. What happened to Adam and Eve because of their sin?

A. They lost holiness and innocence, and became subject to sickness and death.

37 Q. What evil came upon us because of the disobedience of our first parents?

A. We all share in their sin and punishment as we share in their nature, which became corrupt, weak in will, and inclined to evil.

38 Q. What is the sin called which we inherit from our first parents?

A. Original Sin, because it comes down to us from them.

39 Q. Is Original Sin the only kind of sin?

A. No, there are also the sins which we ourselves commit.

40 Q. What are the most dangerous of these sins?

A. They are seven:

1) Pride: the lack of humility befitting a creature of God.

2) Greed: too great a desire for money or worldly goods.

3) Lust: impure and unworthy desire for something evil.

4) Anger: unworthy irritation and lack of self-control.

5) Gluttony: the habit of eating or drinking too much.

6) Envy: jealousy of some other person's happiness.

7) Sloth: laziness that keeps us from doing our duty to God and man.

41 Q. Why did Jesus Christ come to earth for our salvation?

A. After man fell into sin, God did not abandon him, but promised him a Redeemer, who should make satisfaction for his sin and reopen for him the way to salvation.

42 Q. What is meant by salvation?

A. The saving of our souls from sin and the spiritual death of the soul that results from sin.

43 Q. What is meant by the spiritual death of the soul?

A. When the soul suffers spiritual death through sin, it loses spiritual light, joy, and happiness, and exists in a state of darkness, anguish, and suffering.

44 Q. In what way did Jesus Christ accomplish our salvation?

A. By His teachings, His life, His death, and His resurrection.

45 Q. How are we saved by His teachings?

A. When we accept them with our whole heart as He gave them to His Church, and when we live according to them.

46 Q. How are we saved by His life?

A. When we imitate it to the utmost of our ability.

47 Q. What is meant by the word *incarnate*?

A. The word *incarnate* means "took flesh;" we understand it to mean that the Son of God took to Himself human flesh without sin, and was made true man without ceasing to be at the same time true God.

48 Q. How is Jesus Christ true God?

A. Jesus Christ is true God because he is the true and only begotten Son of God the Father.

49 Q. How is Jesus Christ true man?

A. Jesus Christ is true man because He is the son of the Most Holy Virgin Mary and has a body and soul like ours.

50 Q. Are there in Jesus Christ two natures, or only one?

A. In Jesus Christ there are two natures: the nature of God and the nature of man, and likewise two wills, the will of God and the will of man.

51 Q. Are there in Jesus Christ two persons or only one?

A. Jesus Christ is but one person, God and man together.

52 Q. Why do we call the Most Holy Virgin Mary the *Theotokos*, or Mother of God?

A. She is truly *Theotokos* because the same Divine Person who is the Son of God from all eternity is also born of her flesh after His manhood.

53 Q. Why is the *Theotokos* called ever-virgin?

A. Because she remained a virgin before the birth, during the birth, and after the birth of the Savior.

54 Q. How should we think of the dignity of the *Theotokos*?

A. As the mother of our Lord and God and Savior Jesus Christ she excels in grace and nearness to God every created being, and is worthy of all honor and reverence short of that reserved to God alone.

55 Q. How was the Son of God made man?

A. The Son of God was conceived and made man by the power of the Holy Spirit, in the womb of the Most Holy Virgin Mary. This took place on Annunciation Day, when the Angel Gabriel announced to the Most Holy Virgin Mary that she was to become the *Theotokos*.

56 Q. On what day was our Savior born?

A. He was born on Christmas Day, the day which we keep as the Feast of the Nativity.

THE FOURTH ARTICLE OF THE CREED

57 Q. What is the fourth article of the Creed?

A. "And was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate, and suffered and was buried."

58 Q. In what way did Jesus Christ die?

A. He was crucified, that is, nailed to a wooden cross.

59 Q. Who was Pontius Pilate?

A. The Roman governor of Judea in the time of the Emperor Tiberius.

60 Q. Why does this article of the Creed state particularly that Jesus Christ suffered and was buried?

A. To emphasize the fact that His crucifixion was not merely a semblance of suffering and death, but a real suffering and death.

61 Q. What are we taught by the sufferings and death of Jesus Christ?

A. We are taught the great evil of sin, God's hatred of sin, and that satisfaction must be made for sin according to God's justice.

62 Q. How could Jesus Christ suffer and die, when He was God?

A. He suffered and died not as God, but as man; this He did of His own free will, to deliver us from sin and death, the punishment for sin.

63 Q. What do we call this deliverance from sin and death, by the passion and death of Jesus Christ?

A. We call it the Redemption.

64 Q. What are the fruits of the Redemption?

A. The perfect satisfaction of God's justice, and the gaining of a fund of infinite merit and grace by which we are helped to salvation.

THE FIFTH ARTICLE OF THE CREED

65 Q. What is the fifth article of the Creed?

A. "And the third day He rose again, according to the Scriptures."

66 Q. What is the meaning for us of the fact that Jesus Christ rose again from the dead?

A. His glorious resurrection is proof that His sufferings and death have brought about our salvation, and that we too may share in His resurrection.

67 Q. In what state was Jesus Christ after His death, and before His resurrection?

A. His earthly body was in the grave, His soul was in hell, and as God He was on the throne of heaven together

with His Father and the Holy Spirit.

68 Q. What is hell?

A. Hell is a place of darkness, a spiritual prison, the state of those souls which are separated by sin from the sight of God's countenance and the light and blessedness which it confers.

69 Q. Why did Jesus Christ descend into hell?

A. He descended into hell that He might declare His victory over death, and free the souls who with faith awaited His coming.

70 Q. Why did Jesus Christ stay on earth for forty days after His resurrection?

A. He remained to show that He was truly risen from the dead, and to teach His apostles the mysteries of the kingdom of God.

THE SIXTH ARTICLE OF THE CREED

71 Q. What is the sixth article of the Creed?

A. "And ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of the Father."

72 Q. On what day did Jesus Christ ascend into heaven?

A. On the fortieth day after His resurrection, on the day we call Ascension Day.

73 Q. Was it in His Godhead or in His manhood that Jesus Christ ascended into heaven?

A. In His manhood, for in His Godhead He ever was and is in heaven.

74 Q. What is meant by the statement that Jesus Christ "sitteth at the right hand of the Father?"

A. Jesus Christ as God is equal to His Father in all things.

THE SEVENTH ARTICLE OF THE CREED

75 Q. What is the seventh article of the Creed?

A. "And He shall come again with glory to judge the quick and the dead, Whose kingdom shall have no end."

76 Q. Will the second coming of Jesus Christ be like the first?

A. No, He first came in great humility to suffer for us, but He shall come again in glory and majesty to judge us all, both the living and the dead.

77 Q. How will he judge us?

A. There are no secrets from God, and we shall be judged according to all our thoughts, words, and deeds.

78 Q. Will He then condemn us even for evil words and thoughts?

A. Yes, unless we wipe them out by repentance, faith, and amendment of life.

79 Q. Do we know the time of Jesus Christ's second coming?

A. No, therefore we must live so as always to be ready.

80 Q. What is that kingdom of Jesus Christ which shall have no end?

A. His heavenly kingdom, the kingdom of glory which includes all the blessed in heaven.

THE EIGHTH ARTICLE OF THE CREED

81 Q. What is the eighth article of the Creed?

A. "And I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the Giver of Life, Who proceedeth from the Father, Who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified, who spake by the Prophets."

82 Q. Who is the Holy Spirit?

A. The Holy Spirit is the third Person of the Most Holy Trinity and is therefore called the Lord, the same as are God the Father and God the Son.

83 Q. Why is the Holy Spirit called the Giver of Life?

A. Because the Holy Spirit together with God the Father and God the Son gives life to all creatures, and especially spiritual life to men.

84 Q. From whom does the Holy Spirit proceed?

A. As Jesus Christ said (John xv, 26), the Holy Spirit proceeds from God the Father.

85 Q. Why is the Holy Spirit worshipped and glorified together with the Father and the Son?

A. Because He as the third Person of the Most Holy Trinity is equal in all things to God the Father and God the Son.

86 Q. Did the Holy Spirit inspire the Prophets of the Old Testament?

A. Yes; He also inspired Christ's Apostles and came down upon them in the form of tongues of fire on the day of Pentecost, the fiftieth day after Christ's resurrection.

87 Q. How may we be partakers of the Holy Spirit?

A. Through sincere and fervent prayer, and through the Holy Sacraments of the Orthodox Catholic Church of Christ.

88 Q. Which are the gifts of the Holy Spirit?

A. Wisdom, Understanding, Counsel, Fortitude, Knowledge, Piety, and Fear of God.

89 Q. Which are the fruits of the Holy Spirit?

A. Love, Joy, Peace, Patience, Kindness, Goodness,

Long-suffering, Mildness, Fidelity, Modesty, Continence, and Chastity.

THE NINTH ARTICLE OF THE CREED

90 Q. What is the ninth article of the Creed?

A. "And I believe in One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church."

91 Q. What is the Church?

A. The Church is the divinely instituted community of the faithful in Christ, who hold fast to one Faith, who believe in the same dogmas, who have the same worship, who partake of the same Holy Sacraments, and who are governed by their lawful Pastors, the Bishops, who are the successors of the Apostles.

92 Q. Does the Church consist only of the faithful now living upon earth, or does it include also the faithful and holy departed in heaven?

A. The Church includes all the faithful living and dead, who are united in one communion.

93 Q. What is this communion of all the members of the whole Church called?

A. It is called the Communion of Saints.

94 Q. What are the benefits of the Communion of Saints?

A. The faithful on earth help one another by prayers and good works, and help the souls of the faithful departed also by their intercessions for them; the blessed Saints in heaven by their prayers help all the faithful both living and dead, because the Saints are especially beloved of God.

95 Q. What are the marks of the true Church of Christ?

A. The Church is One; it is Holy; it is Catholic; it is Apostolic.

96 Q. Why is the Church One?

A. Because it is one spiritual body, has one Head, and is animated by one Spirit of God.

97 Q. Who is the Head of the Church?

A. Jesus Christ is the Founder and Head of the Church.

98 Q. Why did Jesus Christ found the Church?

A. Jesus Christ founded the Church to help men to attain the Kingdom of God.

99 Q. Why is the Church Holy?

A. The Church is Holy because it is sanctified by the holiness and passion of Jesus Christ its Founder; it is Holy because it teaches His holy doctrine; it is Holy because the Holy Spirit works in men through the Holy Sacraments of the Church; the Church is also Holy because of the great holiness displayed by the multitude of its Saints and by many others of the faithful as well.

100 Q. How is the Church Holy, when it has sinners within it?

A. Sinners who purify themselves by true repentance do not make the Church less holy; impenitent sinners cut themselves off from the body of the Church until they truly repent of their sins and make reparation for them.

101 Q. Why is the Church Catholic?

A. The Church is Catholic, or Universal, because it is not limited to any place, or time, or people, and because it maintains within itself all truth.

102 Q. What are the attributes of the Church according to the promises of Christ?

A. The Church has His authority; the Church through the guidance of the Holy Spirit is infallible in matters of faith and morals; the Church will endure forever, even

to the end of the world.

103 Q. Are all men bound to belong to the Church in order to obtain their salvation?

A. No man can be saved who knows the truth of the Church and wilfully remains apart from it.

104 Q. Why is the Church Apostolic?

A. Because without break or change the Church has from Christ's Apostles its doctrines and the lawful succession of the gifts of the Holy Spirit, through the laying on of consecrated hands.

105 Q. Why is the Church also called Orthodox?

A. The word Orthodox signifies that the Church has the correct belief and the correct teachings about God.

106 Q. Who are the successors of the Apostles?

A. The Bishops of the Orthodox Catholic Church, who are the chief members of the Hierarchy of the Church.

107 Q. Where did the Hierarchy of the Church originate?

A. From Jesus Christ Himself and from the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the Apostles, from whom it is continued in unbroken succession in the Sacrament of Holy Orders.

108 Q. What supreme authority is there which can extend its sphere of action over the whole Catholic Church of Christ?

A. An Ecumenical or General Council of the Pastors and Doctors of the whole Catholic Church.

THE TENTH ARTICLE OF THE CREED

109 Q. What is the tenth article of the Creed?

A. "I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of

sins."

110 Q. What is a Sacrament?

A. A Sacrament is a holy act through which grace, the saving power of God, works mysteriously upon man. The Sacraments are also known as *Mysteries*.

111 Q. How many Sacraments are there?

A. There are seven Sacraments: Holy Baptism, Holy Chrismation, Holy Communion, Penance, Holy Orders, Holy Matrimony, and Holy Unction.

112 Q. Can we receive the Sacraments more than once?

A. The Sacraments of Baptism, Chrismation, and Holy Orders are received only once; the other Sacraments may be received more than once.

113 Q. Do the Sacraments always give grace?

A. The Sacraments always give grace if they are properly administered and received.

THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY BAPTISM.

114 Q. What is Baptism?

A. Baptism is a Sacrament which cleanses the person baptized from original sin and such other sins as he may have committed, and makes him a Christian and an heir to eternal salvation.

115 Q. Is Baptism necessary to salvation?

A. Without Baptism we cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

116 Q. What is essential to the administration of Baptism?

A. Immersion of the person to be baptized in water, three times, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

117 Q. Who can administer Baptism?

A. The Priest is ordinarily the one to administer Baptism, but in case of real necessity any one with the use of reason may baptize.

118 Q. Why are children baptized?

A. That their salvation may be assured, and that they may be better taught the Christian Faith and strengthened in the right way of life from an early age.

119 Q. Why are sponsors given in Baptism?

A. That they may promise for the child what it would promise if it had the use of reason: the renunciation of the devil and all his evil works.

120 Q. What are the duties of sponsors in Baptism?

A. The Godfather and Godmother are obliged to instruct the child in its religious duties if the parents fail or are unable to do so.

121 Q. Why does the Creed mention Baptism only, and not the rest of the Holy Sacraments?

A. At the time when the Creed was formulated there was a question concerning proper Baptism, but not of the other Sacraments.

THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY CHRISMATION

122 Q. What is Chrismation?

A. Chrismation is a Sacrament in which the baptized Christian is anointed with the Holy Chrism on certain places of his body in the name of the Holy Spirit, and thereby receives the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

123 Q. Which are the gifts of the Holy Spirit?

A. Wisdom, Understanding, Counsel, Fortitude, Knowledge, Piety, and Fear of God.

124 Q. What use should we make of these gifts?

A. We should use them to strengthen our spiritual life and direct it towards God; thus we may attempt by our thoughts, words, and actions to please Him who created us.

THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

125 Q. What is Holy Communion?

A. Holy Communion is the Sacrament in which the believer, under the forms of bread and wine, partakes of the true Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ.

126 Q. When and how was this Sacrament instituted?

A. On the night before His death, Our Lord Jesus Christ consecrated the Sacrament for the first time and gave it to His Apostles, commanding them at the same time to continue the Sacrament forever after.

127 Q. How has this Holy Sacrament been continued since our Lord instituted it?

A. It has been continued unceasingly by the Bishops and Priests of the Apostolic Ministry who alone have the power to consecrate the bread and wine and change it into the true Body and Blood of Christ.

128 Q. What is the name of that service of the Church in which is consecrated the Body and Blood of Christ?

A. The Divine Liturgy, the most important of all the services of the Church.

129 Q. What is the Divine Liturgy?

A. The Divine Liturgy is the bloodless sacrifice of the Body and Blood of Christ. On Calvary our Lord offered his bodily life in a bloody sacrifice; in the Divine Liturgy He sacrifices Himself in a bloodless and mystical way.

130 Q. Is the Divine Liturgy the same sacrifice as that of

the Cross?

A. The Divine Liturgy is the same sacrifice as that of the Cross because it is Jesus Christ Who is both Priest and victim, Who offers and is offered; also, the sacrifice of the Divine Liturgy is offered for the same ends as the sacrifice of the Cross.

131 Q. To what ends was the sacrifice of the Cross offered?

A. To give to God the greatest honor and glory possible by the offering of His own Divine Son to satisfy His justice for the sins of men; also, to give thanks to God for all His blessings upon the world and to obtain them for men throughout the ages.

132 Q. What is the most essential part of the Divine Liturgy?

A. The consecration of the Holy Gifts, in which the Priest, after uttering the words of Christ when he instituted the Sacrament, calls upon the Holy Spirit to change the bread and wine into the true Body and Blood of Christ.

133 Q. Why is this part of the Divine Liturgy so essential?

A. Because at the time of this act the bread and wine are changed into the true Body and Blood of Christ.

134 Q. How is this change brought about?

A. Through the operation of the Holy Spirit, in a manner understood only of God.

135 Q. What is the best way of assisting at the Divine Liturgy?

A. We should unite our prayers and thanksgivings with those of the Priest, meditate on the sufferings and death of Christ, and partake of the Holy Communion, the Body and Blood of Christ.

136 Q. What preparation are we required to make before we may receive the Holy Communion?

A. We must examine our conscience before God and cleanse it from sin by penitence; to this end we are aided by prayer and fasting, the examination of our conscience according to the Commandments of God and the Church, and the confession of our sins to God before His Priest.

137 Q. What benefit do we receive when we partake worthily of the Body and Blood of Christ?

A. We are in the closest manner united to Christ Himself, and in Him are made partakers of everlasting life.

138 Q. How often should we receive the Holy Communion?

A. The Church commands us all to confess our sins and receive the Holy Communion during the Holy and Great Week before Easter. This is the absolute minimum. It is better to confess our sins and receive the Holy Mysteries four times a year at each of the Fasts, and even better to do so once a month. Frequent communion is a very great help towards a holy and blessed life.

139 Q. As we go up to receive the Holy Communion, what should we do?

A. We should say to ourselves this prayer, which we must memorize: "I believe, O Lord, and I confess that Thou art truly the Christ, the Son of the living God, Who didst come into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief. And I believe that this is truly Thine own immaculate Body, and that this is truly Thine own precious Blood. Wherefore I pray Thee, have mercy upon me and forgive my transgressions both voluntary and involuntary, of word and of deed, of knowledge and of ignorance; and make me

worthy to partake without condemnation of Thine immaculate Mysteries, unto remission of my sins and unto life everlasting."

140 Q. What should we do after we have received the Holy Communion and return to our place?

A. We should adore our Lord present in the Holy Mysteries, and give thanks to Him for the precious gift of grace we have received, and ask Him for His blessings upon us. We should memorize and say the following brief prayer: "May Thy holy Body, O Lord Jesus Christ our God, be unto me for life eternal, and Thy precious Blood unto remission of my sins. May this Eucharist be unto me for joy, health, and gladness; and at Thy dread Second Coming make me, a sinner, worthy to stand at the right hand of Thy glory: through the intercessions of Thine all-immaculate Mother and of all Thy Saints. Amen."

THE SACRAMENT OF PENANCE

141 Q. What is Penance?

A. Penance is a Sacrament in which sins we have committed after Baptism are forgiven and our soul is restored to the friendship of God.

142 Q. How is this forgiveness and restoration brought about?

A. Through the Priest, who acts as the minister of God by hearing our confession of sins and by granting pardon for them in His name.

143 Q. How do we know that the Priest has the power of absolving sins committed after Baptism?

A. Our Lord Jesus Christ granted that power to the Priests of His Church when He said (John xx, 22-23), "Receive ye the Holy Spirit; whose sins you shall forgive,

they are forgiven them; whose sins you shall retain, they are retained."

144 Q. What must we do to receive the Sacrament of Penance?

- A. 1. We must examine our conscience, that is, try to recall all the sins we have committed since last confession.
2. We must have real sorrow for our sins.
3. We must firmly resolve not to offend God again.
4. We must confess all our sins before the Priest.
5. We must perform the penance which the Priest gives us.

145 Q. How should we examine our conscience?

A. We should first ask God to help us to know our sins and to detest them; then we should examine ourselves in the light of the Commandments of God and the seven grievous sins listed in Question 40.

146 Q. Why should we be sorry for our sins?

A. Because sins are offenses against God and cut us off from Him. Sin is the greatest of evils; by sin we are excluded from the sight of God and made liable to the eternal pains of hell.

147 Q. Why are we given a penance after our confession of sin?

A. The Priest gives us a penance after our confession as an aid to penitence, that we may realize the great evil of sin and keep from sinning again.

148 Q. Which are the chief aids to penitence?

A. Prayer, Fasting, and the performance of the spiritual and corporal works of mercy.

149 Q. Which are the chief spiritual works of mercy?

A. To admonish sinners, to instruct the ignorant, to counsel the doubtful, to comfort the sorrowful, to suffer wrongs patiently, to forgive injuries, and to pray for the living and the dead.

150 Q. Which are the chief corporal works of mercy?

A. To feed the hungry, to give drink to the thirsty, to clothe the naked, to ransom captives, to shelter the homeless, to visit the sick, and to bury the dead.

151 Q. In what manner may we make our confession to the Priest?

A. If we have not already been taught a form of confession, as we come to kneel before God in the presence of His Priest we may say: "I, a sinner, confess to Almighty God, the Lord, One in the Holy Trinity, to the immaculate Virgin Mary the Theotokos, to all the Saints, and to you, my spiritual Father, all my sins: (*Then mention whatever sins you may have committed, and say:*) For these and for all my other sins which I cannot now remember I am heartily sorry that I have offended God, Who is Good, and angered Him against me; I sincerely repent, and I promise with the help of God to better my way of life: wherefore I humbly ask of thee, my spiritual Father, saving penance and absolution." After we have received absolution we should return to our place and give thanks to God for his mercy and forgiveness, and prepare ourselves to receive His immaculate Body and precious Blood.

THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY ORDERS

152 Q. What is the Sacrament of Holy Orders?

A. Holy Orders is the Sacrament in which Bishops, Priests, Deacons, and other ministers of the Church are ordained into their sacred office by the Holy Spirit, through prayer and the laying on of the Bishop's hands.

153 Q. What power and grace is given to each of the chief orders of the Church's ministers?

- A. 1. The Bishop administers all the Holy Sacraments, but to him alone is given the power of conferring the Sacrament of Holy Orders.
2. The Priest in dependence on the Bishop administers all the Holy Sacraments except that of Holy Orders.
3. The Deacon enjoys a limited ministry; he assists the Bishop and the Priest in the administration of the Holy Sacraments.

THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY MATRIMONY

154 Q. What is the Sacrament of Holy Matrimony?

A. Holy Matrimony is the Sacrament in which a Christian man and woman are united in lawful marriage upon their free promise of mutual fidelity before the Priest and the Church.

155 Q. Which are the effects of the Sacrament of Matrimony?

A. The union of husband and wife is blessed and sanctified, and they are given grace to live happily together in love and honesty, and to bring up children in the Orthodox Christian Faith.

156 Q. What should Christians do to insure a holy and happy sacramental marriage?

A. Christians should not enter hastily into marriage, nor contract marriage with persons of a different religion or no religion at all. Christ raised marriage to the dignity of a Sacrament, and none should enter into it with unworthy motives or with the idea that it is a temporary bond and easily broken.

THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY UNCTION

157 Q. What is the Sacrament of Holy Unction?

A. Holy Unction is a Sacrament in which the grace of God is invoked upon a sick person for the healing of soul and body, through anointing with oil and the prayer of the Priest.

158 Q. May we receive the Sacrament of Holy Unction when we are sick but not in imminent danger of death?

A. When we are sick in body we should think of the health of our soul also, for spiritual health and strength greatly assist the return of our body to its normal healthy state.

THE ELEVENTH ARTICLE OF THE CREED

159 Q. What is the eleventh article of the Creed?

A. "I look for the Resurrection of the Dead."

160 Q. What is meant by the Resurrection of the Dead?

A. An act of the almighty power of God whereby the dead shall rise again on the last day, clothed in bodies spiritual and immortal. The bodies of the living shall similarly be transformed at that time and be changed and made incorruptible.

161 Q. In what state are the souls of the departed, pending the general resurrection?

A. The souls of the righteous enjoy light and rest and a foretaste of eternal happiness, while the souls of the wicked are in a contrary state.

162 Q. Why may we not ascribe to the souls of the righteous perfect happiness immediately after death?

A. Because not until the resurrection and Last Judgment shall final and complete retribution be made to every man according to his works.

163 Q. Can the faithful on earth help the souls of the faithful departed?

A. The souls of the faithful departed are aided by prayers offered in their behalf, especially by those offered in conjunction with the Divine Liturgy, the Holy Sacrifice of the Body and Blood of Christ, and by good works done in faith for their memory.

THE TWELFTH ARTICLE OF THE CREED

164 Q. What is the twelfth article of the Creed?

A. "And the Life of the world to come."

165 Q. What is the life of the world to come?

A. The everlasting life in which we shall see God face to face and be glorified with his light, and in which we shall enjoy eternal happiness in union with Him.

166 Q. Will everyone be equally happy in the life to come?

A. There will be different degrees of happiness according to the use we have made of this mortal life in faith, love, and good works; proportionately shall the evil suffer and be deprived of the light of God's countenance, and be given over to everlasting torment.

167 Q. Will our bodies also share in this happiness or torment?

A. Yes, because through our resurrection our bodies will again be united to our souls and be transfigured accordingly.

168 Q. Why should we give thought to these last things, death, resurrection and judgment, heaven, and hell?

A. These thoughts will help us to abstain from sin and to keep our souls and bodies pure; they will keep us from being too fond of material things and help us to live to God and eternity, and to the attainment of everlasting life.

THE CATECHISM
II
THE LORD'S PRAYER

169 Q. Is there any other way in which we can obtain God's grace aside from the Holy Sacraments?

A. God's grace may also be obtained through prayer.

170 Q. What is prayer?

A. Prayer is the lifting up of our minds and hearts to God to glorify Him, to give thanks to Him for His mercies, to ask His forgiveness for our transgressions, and to ask Him for the satisfaction of our needs.

171 Q. What kind of prayer is necessary to obtain God's grace?

A. Prayer must be sincere, and spring from the depths of the mind and heart; spoken words alone do not constitute prayer. When we pray, we must have faith in God's goodness and be conscious of our dependence on the mercy of God.

172 Q. What is the greatest Christian prayer?

A. Christ's own prayer, which we call the Lord's Prayer.

173 Q. What is the Lord's Prayer?

A. "Our Father, Who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil:

For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen."

174 Q. How may we divide the Lord's Prayer, to study it?

A. Into the preface, seven petitions, and the doxology.

175 Q. What is the preface of the Lord's Prayer?

A. "Our Father, Who art in heaven."

176 Q. Why do we say "Our Father?"

A. God is the Father of us all, and we should pray to Him with childlike love and confidence; and, since we are all equally His children, we should love one another as brothers and pray for one another.

177 Q. Why do we add the words, "Who art in heaven?"

A. To remind us that God, although He is everywhere, is especially present in heaven, which is our true home. When we pray, we must lift up our hearts from earthly things to those of heaven.

178 Q. What is the first petition of the Lord's Prayer?

A. "Hallowed be Thy name."

179 Q. What do we ask in this petition?

A. We ask that we and all men may glorify God in word and deed, and may attain to a knowledge of Him.

180 Q. What is the second petition of the Lord's Prayer?

A. "Thy kingdom come."

181 Q. What do we ask in this petition?

A. We ask: 1) that the kingdom of divine grace may be established in our hearts, 2) that the Church, the visible manifestation of God's kingdom, may be extended on earth, and 3) that after this life we may enter into the kingdom of heaven.

182 Q. What is the third petition of the Lord's Prayer?

A. "Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven."

183 Q. What do we ask in this petition?

A. We ask that we and all men may do the will of God on earth with joy and faith as do the angels in heaven. God wishes for us all that is good, but our wills are obstinately inclined to evil, and we need and must pray for God's grace to enable us to do His will as we ought.

184 Q. What is the fourth petition of the Lord's Prayer?

A. "Give us this day our daily bread."

185 Q. What do we ask in this petition?

A. We ask God to give us all that is daily necessary for the welfare of our soul and body. We ask for the needs of one day only, trusting that God will provide for our future as He sees fit.

186 Q. What is the fifth petition of the Lord's Prayer?

A. "Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us."

187 Q. What do we ask in this petition?

A. In contrition for our sins against God we ask Him to forgive us; we ask not only for forgiveness of our sins but also for the forgiveness of our neighbors' sins. We promise to forgive those who have wronged us, for we cannot expect God to forgive us unless we banish from our hearts all ill-will towards those who have offended us.

188 Q. What is the sixth petition of the Lord's Prayer?

A. "And lead us not into temptation."

189 Q. What do we ask in this petition?

A. We ask that God may give us strength to resist and overcome temptation, or to avert it from us if it be His will. God sometimes permits us to be tried by temptation, that we may realize humility and be strengthened in combat against evil.

190 Q. What is the seventh petition of the Lord's Prayer?

A. "But deliver us from evil."

191 Q. What do we ask in this petition?

A. We ask God to preserve us from all evil of soul and body, and especially from sin and its consequences both temporal and eternal. We know that evil is that which separates us from God; that which accords with the will of God and leads us to Him is good.

192 Q. What is the doxology of the Lord's Prayer?

A. "For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen."

193 Q. Why do we add this doxology to the Lord's Prayer?

A. To render to God that honor and glory which is due Him; many of the prayers used in the Church's services end with a similar doxology pronounced by the Priest. The form of the doxology used with the Lord's Prayer in a Church service is "For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, both now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen."

194 Q. What is meant by the Word *Amen*?

A. *Amen* means "So be it." We add this word to our prayers to express our confidence in God, to show that we offer our prayer in faith and without any doubt that God will grant our petitions that are towards the good that He wills for us.

THE CATECHISM

III

THE BEATITUDES

195 Q. What precepts of our Lord may we take as a guide to the attainment of blessedness?

A. Those teachings commonly called the Beatitudes (Matthew v, 3-12), which are as follows:

1. Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
2. Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.
3. Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.
4. Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.
5. Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.
6. Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.
7. Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.
8. Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
9. Blessed are ye when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven.

THE FIRST BEATITUDE

196 Q. What is the first Beatitude?

A. "Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."

197 Q. What is it to be poor in spirit?

A. To have within us the spirit of renunciation of the goods of this world, to realize that nothing good comes to us except from God, and that without God's help we can do nothing good. When we realize the true value of

worldly goods, we perceive something of the kingdom of heaven within us, and have a foretaste of the eternal blessedness of the life to come.

THE SECOND BEATITUDE

198 Q. What is the second Beatitude?

A. "Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted."

199. Q. What is it to mourn?

A. To have real sorrow and contrition for our sins and the sins of the world. When we realize our offences against God and repent of them, we shall be comforted with the grace of absolution. We do not mourn unto despair, for we know that God does not despise the contrite heart but heals it instead

THE THIRD BEATITUDE

200 Q. What is the third Beatitude?

A. "Blessed are the Meek: for they shall inherit the earth."

201 Q. What is it to be Meek?

A. To have self-control and forbearance. The truly meek man pardons personal insults and suffers fools gladly. He is kind to those in his power, and is careful not to misuse his power. The meek man avoids the sin of spiritual pride; he seeks that which is fitting, and receives gladly a proportionate reward.

THE FOURTH BEATITUDE

202 Q. What is the fourth Beatitude?

A. "Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled."

203 Q. What is it to hunger and thirst after righteousness?

A. To have faith in the goodness of God and His saving grace, and to promote actively all good works. We have set before us the Divine ideal of the good, and we must try constantly to come as close to it as we can. The state of righteousness is the possession of those good qualities which God demands in the souls of men.

THE FIFTH BEATITUDE

204 Q. What is the fifth Beatitude?

A. Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.

205 Q. What is it to be merciful?

- A. 1. To perform the spiritual and corporal works of mercy.
2. To forgive injuries and offences when power for vengeance is given us.
3. To relieve the suffering of others.
4. To be compassionate and unselfish, and not to exact the full measure of the law, which may sometimes become an instrument of oppression in the hands of the unmerciful.

Mercy is one of the chief attributes of God; Christian perfection consists in becoming like unto God, Who is all-merciful. It is the quality of mercy in the true Christian that stands in such glorious contrast to the selfishness and vindictiveness of many non-Christians. God will be merciful in His judgment of our sins accordingly as we are merciful in our dealings with our fellow men.

THE SIXTH BEATITUDE

206 Q. What is the sixth Beatitude?

A. "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God."

207 Q. What is it to be pure in heart?

A. To desire that which is pleasing to God, that which is upright and honorable. Our heart must be clean and free from moral defilement, not because we fear punishment for sin, but because we truly love what is pure and good.

THE SEVENTH BEATITUDE

208 Q. What is the seventh Beatitude?

A. "Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God."

209 Q. What is it to be a peacemaker?

A. To strive for the harmony of all men with each other and with God. God loves peace, and those who work with Him for peace merit to be called like unto Him, the children of God. The state of heaven is peace, while that of hell is strife and discord.

THE EIGHTH BEATITUDE

210 Q. What is the eighth Beatitude?

A. "Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."

211 Q. What is it to be persecuted for righteousness' sake?

A. If we truly seek the kingdom of God we shall surely find it, but first we must renounce the friendship of the kingdom of this world. The natural world in which we live rewards those who give themselves over to it: we often see the wicked become rich. The same world attempts to destroy those who resist it for the sake of the supernatural world: we often see the righteous remain in poverty because they refuse to do evil.

THE NINTH BEATITUDE

212 Q. What is the ninth Beatitude?

A. "Blessed are ye when men shall revile you, and

persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for My sake. Rejoice and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven."

213 Q. How are we blessed when we suffer for the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ?

A. Our Lord suffered and died for our salvation; whatever we may suffer on earth for His sake and for the sake of His perfect teachings, we shall be rewarded accordingly when we come into His presence in heaven. He promises us the kingdom of heaven in return for whatever we may lose of material benefits in this world, so long as we are faithful to Him.

THE CATECHISM IV

THE COMMANDMENTS OF GOD

214 Q. Is membership in the Church sufficient to insure our salvation?

A. It is not enough merely to belong to the Church in order to be saved; we must also keep the Commandments of God and of the Church.

215 Q. Which are the Commandments of God?

- A. 1 I am the Lord thy God; thou shalt have no other Gods before me.
2. Thou shalt not make unto thyself any graven image.
3. Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain.
4. Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy.
5. Honor thy father and mother.
6. Thou shalt not kill.
7. Thou shalt not commit adultery.
8. Thou shalt not steal.

9. Thou shalt not bear false witness.
10. Thou shalt not covet.

216 Q. What do these Commandments of God teach us?

A. The first four Commandments teach us our duties towards God; the last six teach us our duties towards our fellow men.

217 Q. How may these duties of ours be stated in brief?

A. Our Lord said (Matthew xxii, 37-40), "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets."

THE FIRST COMMANDMENT OF GOD

218 Q. What is the first Commandment?

A. "I am the Lord thy God; thou shalt have no other gods before me."

219 Q. What are we commanded by the first Commandment?

A. We are commanded to adore and worship God alone.

220 Q. How do we adore God?

A. We adore God by Faith, in that we believe in Him and fear Him; we adore God by hope, in that we trust in Him; we adore God by charity, in that we love and obey Him. We adore Him in prayer when we call upon Him and give thanks to Him, and we adore God when we sacrifice ourselves to Him.

221 Q. How do we break the first Commandment?

A. We break the first Commandment, 1) when we

give to a creature the honor and worship due to God alone, 2) when we attribute to a creature the perfection that belongs only to God, and 3) when we trust in any other than God.

222 Q. How else may we break the first Commandment?

A. By sinning against faith, hope, and charity.

223 Q. How do we sin against faith?

A. We sin against faith, 1) when we do not try to learn about God and His teachings as embodied in Christian doctrine, 2) when we do not believe the teachings of God as set forth by His Church, and 3) when we fail to profess openly our belief in God's teachings, which is the same as denying Him before men.

224 Q. How do we sin against hope?

A. We sin against hope when we distrust God's mercy and when we expect salvation without making use of the means given us to attain it.

225 Q. How do we sin against charity?

A. All sins are sins against charity, the love of God.

226 Q. Does the first Commandment forbid us to honor the Angels and the Saints?

A. No, for when we give them due and rightful honor we honor the grace of God which dwells and works in them.

227 Q. Does the first Commandment forbid us to pray to the Saints?

A. No, for when we pray to them we ask their help and prayers, just as we would ask the help and prayers of our friends in the Church on earth.

THE SECOND COMMANDMENT OF GOD

228 Q. What is the second Commandment?

A. "Thou shalt not make unto myself any graven image."

229 Q. What are we commanded by the second Commandment?

A. We are commanded not to make images or idols or to worship them as though they were gods.

230 Q. Does the second Commandment forbid us to have respect for Ikons of our Lord, the Theotokos, and the Saints?

A. No, as long as we regard the Ikons only as representations and memorials of our Lord, the Theotokos, and the Saints, and not as gods to be worshipped for themselves.

231 Q. Are we allowed to pray to the holy Ikons?

A. We are not allowed to pray to the holy Ikons but we may pray before them, that they may serve to remind us of God and increase our devotion to Him.

232 Q. Does the second Commandment forbid us to honor the relics of the Saints?

A. No, because they are the bodies of the Saints or objects connected with them. We may honor them as we do the holy Ikons and pray before them in similar fashion, but we are not allowed to pray to them, as they of themselves have no power to help us.

THE THIRD COMMANDMENT OF GOD

233 Q. What is the third Commandment?

A. "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain."

234 Q. What are we commanded by the third Commandment?

A. We are commanded to speak reverently of God, of all holy people and things, and to keep our lawful oaths and vows.

235 Q. What does the third Commandment forbid?

A. It forbids blasphemy, cursing, profanity, lying, the breaking of lawful oaths and vows to God, and thoughtless prayers in which we call upon God inattentively.

236 Q. What is a lawful oath?

A. When we call solemnly upon God to witness the truth of what we say, we take an oath; lawful oaths are those which we are required to take by lawful civil authority. Oaths loosely used in conversation are actually blasphemous in their disrespect for God.

237 Q. What is a vow?

A. A vow is a solemn promise made to God to do something good and pleasing to Him; failure to keep a vow is a sin against God.

THE FOURTH COMMANDMENT OF GOD

238 Q. What is the fourth Commandment?

A. "Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy."

239 Q. What are we commanded by the fourth Commandment?

A. To keep holy the Lord's Day and the Feasts in honor of our Lord and the Saints, and to observe the periods of fasting ordained by the Church.

240 Q. How are we to keep Sundays and Holy Days?

A. We are to keep Sundays and Holy Days by attending the Divine Liturgy, by prayer, and by the performance

of other good works.

241 Q. Are Sunday and the Sabbath Day the same?

A. No, the Sabbath Day is the seventh day of the week, Saturday, and is kept by the Jews; Christians keep Sunday, the day of our Lord's resurrection.

242 Q. Which are the great Feasts which we are obliged to keep?

A. Besides the Great Feast of the Resurrection (Easter), we keep with especial solemnity eight other Feasts in honor of our Lord and four in honor of the Theotokos. The eight Feasts of our Lord are:

- | | |
|---|-------------------------------|
| 1. Christmas | December 25 |
| 2. Theophany (The Baptism of Christ) | January 6 |
| 3. The Presentation of the Lord | February 2 |
| 4. Palm Sunday | The Sunday before Easter |
| 5. Ascension | The fortieth day after Easter |
| 6. Pentecost | The fiftieth day after Easter |
| 7. Transfiguration | August 6 |
| 8. The Elevation of the Holy Cross (a fast) | September 14 |

The Feasts in honor of the Theotokos are:

- | | |
|----------------------------------|-------------|
| 1. The Nativity of the Theotokos | September 8 |
| 2. Her Entrance into the Temple | November 21 |
| 3. The Annunciation | March 25 |
| 4. The Repose of the Theotokos | August 15 |

There are also four important Feasts:

- | | |
|---|-----------|
| 1. The Circumcision of the Lord | January 1 |
| 2. The Nativity of St. John Baptist | June 24 |
| 3. Saints Peter and Paul | June 29 |
| 4. The Beheading of St. John Baptist (a fast) | August 29 |

243 Q. Which are the Fasts that we are obliged to keep?

A. There are four periods of fasting each year:

1. The Fast before Christmas, which begins on November 15 and lasts until Christmas.
2. The Great Fast (Great Lent), which extends over the forty days preceding Palm Sunday. On the Monday after Palm Sunday begins the special Fast in honor of the Passion of Christ; this Fast lasts until Easter.
3. The Fast of the Holy Apostles, which begins one week after Pentecost and lasts until June 29, the Feast of the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul.
4. The Fast before the Repose of the Theotokos, which begins on August 1 and lasts until August 15, the day of the Feast.

The Church also marks with fasting three other days of the year:

1. August 29, the Beheading of St. John Baptist.
2. September 14, the Elevation of the Holy Cross.
3. January 5, the Eve of the Theophany.

244 Q. Why are we commanded to fast on Wednesdays and Fridays?

A. We fast on Wednesdays in memory of the betrayal of our Lord, and on Fridays in memory of His suffering and death.

245 Q. What are we forbidden by the fourth Commandment?

A. The fourth Commandment forbids us to do unnecessary work or anything else on the Lord's Day that may prevent us from proper and reverent observation of the day.

THE FIFTH COMMANDMENT OF GOD

246 Q. What is the fifth Commandment?

A. "Honor thy father and mother."

247 Q. What are we commanded by the fifth Commandment?

A. We are commanded to love, honor, and obey our parents in whatever is not sinful, to assist them in sickness and need, and to pray for the salvation of their souls after their death.

248 Q. Are we bound to obedience to any others besides our parents?

A. We are bound to honor and obey the lawful spiritual and civil authorities who have jurisdiction over us.

249 Q. What are the duties of parents and superiors towards those in their charge?

A. Parents and superiors must have proper care for the welfare of those in their charge, and protect and guide them to the best of their ability.

THE SIXTH COMMANDMENT OF GOD

250 Q. What is the sixth Commandment?

A. "Thou shalt not kill."

251 Q. What are we forbidden by the sixth Commandment?

A. We are forbidden wilful murder, hatred, revenge, and any act that may endanger the life of our neighbor.

252 Q. What are we to think of suicide?

A. Suicide is the most criminal of murders; our life is not our own to take, but God's who gave it.

253 Q. What are we commanded by the sixth Commandment?

A. To live in charity with our neighbors and to take proper care of ourselves. The performance of the spiritual and corporal works of mercy is enjoined upon us by this Commandment.

THE SEVENTH COMMANDMENT OF GOD

254 Q. What is the seventh Commandment?

A. "Thou shalt not commit adultery."

255 Q. What are we forbidden by the seventh Commandment?

A. We are forbidden to indulge in impure thoughts, words or deeds.

256 Q. What are we commanded by the seventh Commandment?

A. We are commanded to be pure in heart, to be modest and self-restrained, and to avoid contacts with impure and unworthy people and things. We are commanded to keep chaste our minds as well as our bodies, which are temples of the Holy Spirit; if we do or think anything that degrades us, we violate the seventh commandment.

THE EIGHTH COMMANDMENT OF GOD

257 Q. What is the eighth Commandment?

A. "Thou shalt not steal."

258 Q. What are we forbidden by the eighth Commandment?

A. We are forbidden to take for ourselves anything that belongs to another, by any means whatsoever, open or secret.

259 Q. What are we commanded by the eighth Commandment?

A. We are commanded to give all men their due, to be upright in all our dealings, and to respect the rights and property of others.

The NINTH COMMANDMENT OF GOD

260 Q. What is the ninth Commandment?

A. "Thou shalt not bear false witness."

261 Q. What are we forbidden by the ninth Commandment?

A. We are forbidden all untruth, lying, slander, and hasty judgment of the faults of others.

262 Q. What are we commanded by the ninth Commandment?

A. We are commanded to speak the truth at all times, to be honest with others, with ourselves, and with God. We are commanded to make good to the best of our ability any injuries we may have done to others.

THE TENTH COMMANDMENT OF GOD

263 Q. What is the tenth Commandment?

A. "Thou shalt not covet."

264 Q. What are we forbidden by the tenth Commandment?

A. We are forbidden all sinful desire for anything that belongs to another; we are forbidden to be envious of another's good fortune, or to desire more than God has seen fit to give us.

265 Q. What are we commanded by the tenth commandment?

A. We are commanded to be content with our lot in life, and to be glad for our neighbor's prosperity.

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